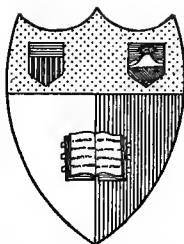


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THE FLIGHT
OF GUINEVERE
AND OTHER POEMS



GEORGE V. A. McCLOSKEY



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THE FLIGHT OF GUINEVERE
AND OTHER POEMS

THE FLIGHT
of
GUINEVERE
AND OTHER POEMS

BY
GEORGE V. A. McCLOSKEY
Author of "Lyrics"

AUTHORS & PUBLISHERS CORPORATION
FOURTH AVENUE AND 30TH STREET, NEW YORK

MCMXXI

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To all who seek and few who find!
Our life is happiness if we
Have but enough of life to be
Active in body and in mind
And clean of heart and in all free.

The light of God on nature's face,
Her music echoed in man's heart,
Let all life to our own give grace,
A freedom as of worlds apart,
The soul of song, the scope of art.

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THE FLIGHT OF GUINEVERE

I

ARTHUR

HAIL and well met, Sir Bedivere!
All night I hastened to be here
The sooner for Queen Guinevere
To bid her know that all is well.
Full little sleep had I yet fell
Into a dream, as on I rode,
That in a castle I abode.
The hall was hung with trophies rare
Of war and chase and pilgrimage,
Gathered from noble age to age,
And tapestries of many dyes
Displayed before my eager eyes
The feats of arms in old emprise.
The rush-laid floor I made my bed.
The knights upon the tapestries,
As if with Lancelot at head,
In sudden onset raised a breeze:
I felt it on my forehead bare.
I woke: the castle was not there.
The hoofbeats died upon the air:
The dream so lingered in my ears.
A spell? A dream unworthy fears!
Yet from the dream, as on I rode,
Perforce some evil I forebode.

But I am come and with no stay.
The night has dreams but what the day?
Blow royally: the Queen will rise
More blithe and prompt to welcome me.
What doubt, what dread is in your eyes!
What troubles all and where is she?

She is fled! Yet let her flee
If in flight her solace be.
Lancelot in arms I seek
For my heart I can not speak.
Lancelot is vanished quite?
Tho' he be the foremost knight
Both in tourney and in fight,
Yet he stayed not to withstand,
Sword to sword and hand to hand,
In such cause both king and right.

And this by Lancelot was done!
How many men there are in one!
But Guinevere! She false! And who,
If she is false, can yet be true?

When first I saw thee, Guinevere!
I would be King to make thee Queen,
A queen to all in being mine!
I felt: my destiny is here!
For on the stair of light between
The earth and heaven thou wast seen.
Thy beauty was so all divine
I deemed thy love should be no less,
Thy soul the soul of nobleness.
The silent laughter of thy look,
Clear as the sunlight-paven brook,

Was like bright ripples of delight
In all the course of day and night,
As if, to form so fair a whole,
God shaped thy person to thy soul.
All love appeared thy due of old,
The love that could not honor thee
So much as it ennobled me,
And for that love my heart grew bold
To make all virtue and all duty
Part of my love as of thy beauty.
Fair bride I brought to Camelot!
The skies might change—I saw it not—
For of thy looks I took my fill
And there the sun was shining still.
I knew not where I set my pace:
I lived as on thy lips a smile
Still renewed by thy sole grace,
And joy my kingdom was the while.
In my first youth I seemed to be
In being so made one with thee.
Thy look, thy motion, mien and face
Made graciousness the queenliest grace.
The world before me, it was sweet
To win and lay it at thy feet.

Where is my lady-love? Ah! where?
For I shall never find her more
Upon the throne she graced before
Nor even in herself so fair.
She stepped with faery-footed ease
And so much heart was in her look
That every heart at once she took
Who, darkly guilty, darkling flees.

Virtue, not passion, is the ground
Where only constancy is found.
Life? It was her inspiration.
Death? Her kiss would have repaid.
O the grievous change she made!
Love her? 'T is to be betrayed.
Not to love her—desolation!
Well it were for Guinevere,
Well for me, could she have died
Still my own and on her bier
Had I fallen dead beside!
All I am I made her crown,
All, and she has cast it down
Whom I loved above renown.
Glory's look was in her eyes—
Proud romance to fill the space
Of a life-time with its grace.
Ah! how great the hope that dies!
Sick at heart am I to find
She is so much flesh and blood
And so little heart and mind.
Life she knew not, only mood.
But to me, who still draw breath,
Bitterer than all other death
Is it that our love should die.
Yet no tender tears have I
For their very springs are dry.
Mocking visions of my youth—
Hope and love and woman's truth—
Let them not again come nigh!
When shall I triumph, when have said:
My heart is quiet now, quite dead?
Yet no longer to feel pain
Who would count it as a gain
All unfeeling to remain?

I have so much grief to grieve
That I can not well believe
All is not a dream
From which I shall yet awake
And from my true being shake
All it now may seem.
Pain it is above all pain
All I suffer is in vain.
Show my foe: I strike him dead.
But I feel a heart-sick dread
Knowing not its object, whence
Comes this blindly boding sense.
All the wars that I have fought,
All the works that I have wrought,
All the ends that I have sought,
All my life with labors fraught,
All—I know it—shall be brought,
As my love is, unto naught.

The cry of hearts against their fate
Was ever this: it is too late!
O destined consequence unthought
Of act and word and will that sought
Far other ends and this have wrought!
We, too, are of the fates and weave
At random or of purpose still
The life for which we joy or grieve,
The life that mocks our toilsome will,
And darkly we at last are laid
Like ghosts that make all hearts afraid
Lest fate and heart be once displayed,
Lest men be to themselves unmasked
And by their secret being tasked.
But we, the ghosts of what we were,

Yet walk without a sepulchre.
Who of the nearest soul can know
The stressful hour till this be past?
Yet, had I won her long ago,
She would have loved me first and last.
Too late! It is thy thought as well,
Self-banished Guinevere! yet dwell
In peace, if peace be for thy heart,
Till, as I deemed, all soul thou art!
The great green earth, the great blue sky,
While these remain, I would not die
But pass where only these are nigh.
Yet God will strengthen me again
To go in power the ways of men.
But call the bard whose words so long
Have caught the heart up into song—
The soul of beauty speaking truth,
Imaginative evocation
In cadences of new delight
And rhythmic impulse free as flight
Till all partake his inspiration
As if in age restored to youth!
If life have heart, it must have song
And what is heartless, what but wrong?

(THE BARD'S SONG)

All our hearts, did they avow
What they loved and dare not now,
Some brave fancy would disclose.
Deem we then that we grow wise
That the heart itself denies—
Inspiration quite forgoes?
Hearts must still with fancy play
Or begin to die away.

Our best deeds are fancies first.
Heart! contract not: rather burst!
How much greater what we are
Than the greatest deed we do,
So the soul, that action's star,
Will outlive, transcend it too!
What if others still are blind
To the knighthood that we own,
For the brute is his own kind
But the man himself alone!
Were there on the earth but one
Generous heart since time began,
I would wish to be that man.
Who would not when all is done?
Not renown but deeds that best
Merit fame shall be our quest.
Virtue in restraint and action
Has this godlike satisfaction
That the heart it has illumed
Is self-sustained, not self-consumed.

(ARTHUR RESUMES)

So make the hearer poet too!
The dream is still the strength to do.
All strength am I, heart, hand and will,
By opposition stronger still.
No man is greater than his soul
And none is less, so heart be whole.
Greatness it is, altho' we fail,
To have aspired. Our spirits hold
What must escape the hand of mail.
If all shall pass, as all of old,

The great design remains a thought
Creating, godlike, out of naught.
If little of our life is flower,
The range of action sweeter grows
Than dreams of wingless faint repose:
The truest calm is perfect power.

II

GUINEVERE

Call my sister—abbess here—
Tell her I am Guinevere!
“Welcome home!” What kindly cheer!
For no longer Queen am I,
Fleeing from my shame to die
As one that never looked on high.
Few upon the road I passed:
The sky was shot with lightnings vast
And once I saw by such a gleam
A knight ride by as tho’ in dream
On such a steed as Arthur’s. Yea,
Ere he was ’ware, I was away
Yet from my lips escaped a cry.
I fled: I hid and none came by.
Yet had I fled the palace gate
For Arthur’s wrath or Modred’s hate
Alone and with no more in mind
I had not come a way so hard
But taken ship to Joyous Garde
And there my queenhood I should find
With Lancelot who bade me flee
With him who still would champion me.
But for new wrong I had no heart:
I would at once with all things part,

Even with Lancelot—for his sake,
That from the spell he may awake,
The fatal spell that I have wrought.
I dared not tell him all my thought
Lest I should weave another way
The bond I loose for him to-day.

Let Arthur think not I am changed:
He never won me or estranged.
My heart was Lancelot's alone
Ere it was free to be my own.
It was Sir Lancelot who came
With Merlin of an elder fame—
A power then and now a name—
My hand for Arthur's self to claim.
I in close-bound maidenhood,
Narrowed to a household law,
That new world of freedom saw
In Lancelot and found it good.
Who would not love that first of men
Or, loving him, could love again?
This I make not my defense:
If I have not innocence,
I would have and bear the truth,
Not the falsehoods of my youth.

But well I mind me how, a bride,
With retinue of warlike port,
I set out for Arthur's court,
His ambassador beside.
Green hills brightened by the sun,
Darkly shadowed by the cloud,
Deeply valleyed, fold on fold,
Where the birds that answer one

Another mingle song with song
Streaming all the way along
Like the woodland waters loud!
There in state we passed of old
On embowered roads that run
Whither none could tell for none
Went so far before and we
Wished them endless, thus to be
Following joy and never done.
When wide waters came in view
To the tawny sands we drew.
There the children follow after
That retreating wave that swells
On their flight till, where it laves,
Fleetly will they gather shells—
Whorls that ring with echoed laughter
Of innumerable waves.
There we moved in exaltation.
There was action inspiration,
Idleness a reverie.
No word of love he spoke: no less
Was every word a new caress.
Cliff and surge and sky grew tender
In one ruddy golden splendor.
In our hearts—we felt their throbbing—
All grew one with love, to be
As many voices in one sea.
Dawn, from seaward, breaking bright,
Lifted all the hills to light.
Let the loud sea break in sobbing
And ocean's coming trumpets sound!
Inland anew our course we wound,
Where change is one with rest and ease,
Between the woodland and the seas,

Past hill-top, windmill, far-off steeple,
By waste heaths and wondering people,
The wild bird's song, the whispering trees.
At last to Camelot we came
And how the gathered throng had grown!
My heart was borne on their acclaim,
My heart that would have sunk alone,
And I, already Queen in thought,
To bridal and enthronement brought,
Was carried onward, it would seem,
As by the movement of a dream
Nor felt the woman for the while
Whom love could yet again beguile.

Springtime anew, upon a day
When the chase bore all away,
With Sir Lancelot I came
Where we passed before and I,
Seated on a rock on high,
Whence the world one could espy,
Asked, without a thought of blame,
Why the knight who ever bore
Heart so nobly, arms so well,
Never lady's favor wore.
Silent, to his knees he fell:
I bent o'er him: our lips met,
Trembling, and I tremble yet.
Too happy we that fatal day!
The lonely lake that lay a-shimmer,
A pool of sun, grew shadowy gray.
In all the sky one cloud a-glimmer
Was shaping to the wind in flight—
A wraith of sunset. So came night.

No further of that love I tell
But oft it chanced as then befell.
I yielded for my love was blind
Nor knew denial were more kind.
How oft I grieved him for vain cause!
Would I had broken for just laws!
Too oft I felt—how frail we are!—
The flesh is near and heaven is far.
I had no will but what love would,
Yet, having so much and no more,
I longed at distance for all good
And pride but as a shield I bore.
Once fallen was no more to rise,
For so it seemed to our own eyes.
But all was fair to Arthur's gaze.
My falsehood smote me in his praise.

Much love may grow to more, ah, yes!
But little love grows ever less.
Arthur had glory for his part,
To be of all the first in might,
Breathing at once in every knight,
With grappling hands he drew at length,
Out of all things around him, strength,
But beauty only from his heart
To order chaos for a time
And make the common world sublime.

Arthur, Lancelot and I!
I should bear the grief of three
As their griefs come all by me.
Kingliest knight and knightliest king,
Both to sorrow must I bring.
Here I live and here I die.

I who wrought of ill the whole,
I am powerless for good.
Arthur comes not for he would
Not reproach nor can console.
Half his virtues, I must own,
Were too quiet to be known
But by virtue's eye alone.
By what font of hallowing,
Shall I meet thee, O my king!
Soul to soul, O soul apart!
Still be twice a king and bind
Thy crown upon a kingly mind!
Wronged forever as thou art,
Thou wilt pity my weak heart.
Heart at war with all thy past!
All sin is weariness at last!

III

LANCELOT

How came I to chance this way
Where I find myself with day
Breaking o'er the paths of night
Steeped anew in dewy light!
Well I know the spot and here
Brought—to Arthur—Guinevere!
She had hardly known what moved her
And I knew not how I loved her,
Till she stood at Arthur's side
And I saw her as his bride:
Our looks met and with a start
Each beheld the other's heart.

How changed the season and our eyes
How changed that challenge wintry skies!
The trees are bare of leaf and song;
The ground is bare of snow or green,
Only the wan brown herbage seen,
Only black branches and gray sky,
Wet hollows, wind-topped heights and long
Far vistas from her rock on high.
Come spring again, come song and bower,
Come all the sun to winter bare
With tender touch to make it fair
With leafage fine and blossoms rare
That, fallen, leave their riches there,
But never to the broken bower
Come Guinevere and I, her knight,
Nor any voice of love's delight!
The strain, the voice come o'er me here,
That song she learned for Arthur's ear
And felt for me—my Guinevere!

(SONG)

O would it were my lot to be
Alone in some far isle with thee
Where life is always youth and spring
And never messenger might bring
Word of the world or fear of fate
But love be all and still elate!

For so to hold thy single heart
Hath more of sovereign and serene
Than that a world should hail me queen,
Yet since the great world will not part
With thee, its glory, nor can I,
Give song to me and all who sigh!

Gone the secret hours when I
Sang and she could make reply:

(SONG)

The proudest secret humbly broken
Like bread before too great a guest
Howe'er love speak, there's more unspoken.

In lightest tone of slightest word
The breathing soul of love confessed
Is understood, if love have heard.

Piteous, like a ghostly cry—
A soul that would and may not die—
Comes to me the song that I
Did make to stifle every sigh
When to love was love relief,—
Comes but like another's now,
Such the change upon my brow,
And across a gulf of grief.

(SONG)

Never was there heart so free
As our love hath made in me,
 Never love so fond.

Birds will sing, for love is sweet—
Lives how little yet complete,
 Knowing naught beyond.

But my soul will find too small
Kingdoms and adventures all,
Having known thy heart.

So will fancy soar in play
On the wings love gave away,
Love that will not part.

Nay, I have not voice to sing
Tho' a song were comforting,
Were it, as I once could hear
From the lips of Guinevere,
Song to give the spirit wing
Like a bird in arrowy flight
From deep forest into sky
With a joy as wide and high,
Song to gloomy mood as bright
As the rippling smile of light
Though dark boughs upon a stream
Where the wind will stir in dream.
Easily as waters run,
All as laughingly she sang
Till the caverned echo rang
Laughing from the dusk to sun.
Heaven's sweet, earth's bitter, fruit,
Love, within our hearts took root.
Happy love, life's happiest,
Often as our hearts drew near,
Fled my guilt and fled her fear:
Secret faith and perilous quest
Made each fonder and more dear.
Keenly sweet our every meeting
For we knew that broken-hearted
Yet not when we must be parted,

We who in our very greeting
Trembled lest it be farewell.
We sinned in love, not loved for sin;
Only the best in each could win
The other yet by this we fell.
From the first have all things tended
To the fate where they have ended.
I who thought afar to range
Feared to break her heart with change.
Would the wars had carried me
Far away, my queen! from thee
Into strange lands oversea,
There to leave a glorious name,
There to raise, not mar, thy fame!
That was possible, but that we
Should not love, it could not be!
Life has been and death shall be
In a deeper dream of thee
For whose sake alone is life
More than death and worthy strife!

She was fair and I was young—
So is all the story told.
How much grief the heart can hold
And how little finds a tongue!
Tho' from me the ears dissever
All that once was mine, my queen!
I forget not and forever
It must be that this has been!
Dawn of yesterday must borrow
E'en the sun to make the morrow.
God who made the heart of man
Heal my heart for none else can!

If the Grail I may not see,
Let the quest enlighten me!
Such the hope that once I had;
So the Queen at parting bade.
On the parting still I dwell—
Broken words and fond replies!
As the light the dying eyes,
So leave mine! The heart abides.
Till death unite whom life divides—
Ah, that it must be so!—farewell!

BIRD-SONG

A BIRD is singing. Let us hear,
For, knowing we would listen near,
How joyously he pipes and clear,
As if within our heart alone
To pour the fullness of his own!
Each sunward soaring, sparkling note
He warbled from an open throat
Has sunk in stillness to his heart,
There echoed, throbbing there apart,
Until for joy of so much sweet
He will again the song repeat.
Our silence is as feeling quite
As e'en the voice of his delight
And we are borne the while he sings,
To other lands and other days,
To youth that fled and dream that stays.
His song, our thought, are all our wings.

CLIFF-DWELLERS

IN shadow here of rocks so high
That we would flee to see the sky,
The little birds that are how shy—
Lest the wild silence so appall
We find not in our soul a cry—
Full softly twitter where they light
And at a living tread they call
Alarm and flight!

NIGHT BY THE SEA

STILL lives the glory of the sun,
Resplendent changes fading fast,
And twilight comes—a star—but one—
And all the stars of night at last.
Mysterious heavens overhead,
Mysterious waters wide outspread,
Whose lights alone of ship and star
Disclose the measureless afar,
Darkling upon the shore are we,
The shore at once of sky and sea,
The twofold vast that, if we knew,
Can not be taken at one view
But must be felt by voyaging
Long time with birds of strongest wing.
What furthest heavens open lie!
Yet half is hid by earth that rolls
Midway between the starry poles,
For we are travelers of the sky
And now have somewhat of the sense:
The world in darkness is gone hence,
The stars are nearest to the eye.

MAY WINDS

PLUCKING the blossoms and afar
Voyaging, trackless as a star,
And still uniting in thy mirth
The touch of heaven, the breath of earth,
Be winged like hours of laughing play
Or unremembered thought and word
Forgot in joy that spoke and heard,
A springing joy that onward flows,
O wind that makes the most of May
As if each morn that comes and goes
Were happiest that it is to-day!
We who are longer young than old
And much of youth in age may hold,
Who but sojourn and must depart,
The while go singing on and on
With thee in fellowship of heart
To see the world that God hath made.
How all thy new old scent of spring
To memory and sense can bring
The breath of youth, the glad years gone
And childhood's flowers that never fade,
The flower-bells that faeries rang
On meads of legendary youth
Whose fallen blossoms seem to hang
Once more on trees as old as truth.

DREAM AND DAWN

WAKENING, hearing the birds,—in the shadow that
dwelt on my eyelids,—
Distantly, dreamily singing, I grew from the vague
into selfhood.

Slumber to melt into melody, dream that can hear
itself waken
Linger no longer but leave me as one new-born of
the daylight,
Sun that enkindled a star, then the upraised face
of the mountain,
Vales that were hollows of dusk and the west that
yet borders on darkness
Flying before thee as nothing and stealing behind
thee as all things,
Sun! of thy making am I for not as I slumbered
I waken.

AWAKENING

ACROSS my sleep the thunder rolled
And deeper still I slumbered till
The dawn was red, the sunrise gold—
How fair a world had day to fill!

It seemed that life was new again
Nor ever wore a look before
So kindly and so pure as then.
The past, my other life of yore,

Such heart of peace did never know.
When death is done, the vision won,
So Paradise itself will show
And we in God our spirits sun!

THE DRYADS

TRUE instinct found the dryads in the trees
And gave a humanizing grace to these,
Tho' mute and motionless until a soft
Whisper will stir the rippling leaves aloft
That shield from darting sun and pattering rain
The cradled song-birds till they fly again.
Nature a slayer and all life a spoil
Elsewhere behold but, quickening the soil,
The trees are nature's mildest majesty
And grow to man an ageless memory,
Shadowing o'er his birth, his home, his grave.
Dryads! the tree we plant, the grove we save
And in the falling, springing leaves we view
Our mortal end and endless hope renew!

DREAMS ALL

THE visioned mind of sleeping sense
The waking reverie,
The will to make the thought intense,
The fiery fantasie,
As all are foreign, all are hence
A dream, O world! to thee.

Dreamer and dream are one indeed—
There's so much truth in dream. ~
The hidden heart of life is freed
To be, in thought, supreme,
As we in act, did all succeed,
To all the world would seem.

The world may press and mold us till
 We seem its very own
But yet do we escape it still
 And thank high heaven alone
That from the world we fleet at will
 And all a dream is grown,

No less the evil that we flee,
 The good that we embrace.
O slavish world that hates the free!
 Why covet, why abase
Our birthright, fancy, save it be
 A rich and signal grace?

Pursued, the dream will lead us far
 Tho' all beside be night,
For tho' we never reach the star
 It reaches us its light.
Our destiny we shall not mar
 Who hold to such a height.

IDYLL OF ARCADIAN SINGERS

A VALE, a flower in the rocks, lies open
Only to rain and sky and towering sun—
So do the uptossed mountains close it round,
As if they loved it—and a torrent chill
Falls, foaming, headlong from the height of dawn
And dances, all in singing laughter, down
To gleaming shallows till it slips away
Under the wooded ridges, thence, afar,
To issue, hallowed fount of other vales.
Here had a wandering shepherd of the hills
Found grace to see, at midnight, Artemis

Whose vesture, from her fairness, cast off light.
Alone she came nor was the less a queen.
So startled yet by beauty well assured,
He knelt to her who chanted words of power
And from that night no song was sweet as his
And wild things of the wood were tame to him.
But long of yore it chanced and he had long
Gone hence yet never was his body found:
So grew a whisper that the blissful gods
In secret rapt him from the world away
And of their lost Endymion did men tell
Such tales as grow in telling, like a cloud
That gathers fullness from the empty air.
But he to song traditions true bequeathed,
Old root of later flowers not elsewhere found,
And here the shepherds gather on a ledge,
At hill-top, jutting o'er the valley view.
Some tell their memories: the others speak
Of present things and all now bid begin.
The eldest, chill with age and fond of sun,
For he was worn to sinews and a voice,
Piped out to those who sat beneath the pines:

Bring forth the vintage sealed away
When I was young that so youth may
Return if only for a day
And pour to all the ruby wine
And to the gods their gift divine!

So warm the heart of life within!
So rouse the fancy till it win
Where speech will end and song begin—
A heart too quickened to be still,
A music singing as it will!

Old in his own and young in elder eyes,
Came one whose step was stately and yet light.
Not youth but its remembrance and not age
But its foreboding met in him who reached,
At hill-top, nothing but the double view—
Ascent, decline—and would no further go.
To youth he turned, too weary-wise for play
Yet half a playmate of old moods the while,
As one who watches from a garden gate
The flowers, the children, bees and butterflies,
And, holding back for very ruth and fear
Lest he do some displeasure to the scene,
Feels his own childhood taking part in all.

I still love youth now I grow old,
Even the blind mistakes it made
In hope that thought not to be stayed
And warmth of heart how overbold!
The thews that answer to the will,
The eye of joy, I love them still.

How fair is fame when toil is hope!
How sweet the song as yet unsung!
How full our love when we are young
And heart can find in life its scope!
What prudence can be worth in truth
The generousities of youth?

Of years had we in youth no fear
And yet we lost it ere we thought
Nor knew, until its passing wrought
Such change within, it was so dear.
We feel when only age is left,
Our lives are of ourselves bereft.

They call on one long parted from these hills.
A minstrel, he had sung in princes' halls
And borne in alien wars a forward part—
Each scar that marred him was a separate pride—
Yet, having seen so much no longer new,
To live with youthful memories returned
But found the comrades of his prime were dead
Or grown away from him as he from them.
Hardly a thought in common, all were strange
And none profuse of welcome and esteem
Where, having left, he thought to find his home.
So long away, he must again go hence,
But, ere he went, he lingered: here he sang,
Touching the lyre as careless of the prize:

A vision came:
Her look was love,
Her voice was fame,
Her breath was health,
Her vesture wealth
And joy above
All joy her name.
Such hope to youth!
Has age, forsooth,
A better truth?
To men to-day,
To gods to-morrow,
Yet be as free
The while as they
Nor seek thy sorrow
Ere this find thee.
If all take wing,
The joy is worth
The grief of earth.
Be strong and sing!

Little of all he sang had they at heart
Yet some applauded for he came so far
They thought his better than their native song
And more had thought so but it sprang to mind
That he was born their fellow countryman.
Again he sang, forgetful of their use,
As if among Ionian halls afar:

Home is where we fix our heart,
Whence with longing we depart,
Whither we with gladness turn,
There to find the single place
Love and every fancy grace,
Yet if on no hearth for me—
Wanderer over land and sea—
Savors of such sweetness burn,
Freedom is my fatherland
And, however far it fly,
Still I follow till I die,
Song on lips and sword in hand!

All lightly turned to hear another sing.

Take leave nor think to see again
The earth, its waters and its heaven:
What happy things the gods have given
Yet happiness withheld from men!
At birth, at dying—portals dim—
There lieth pain, a warder grim.
Where treasure is, a guard is set.
All quick with spirit, ear and eye,
Why should our life so fear to die?
Life can remember, death forget!
Perturb not we the quiet dead

But take their hallowed calm to heart
And they will seem the less apart.
They speak not for their lives have said.
Their immortality we know
By this, that they deserve it so.

Then he was silent—he who sang of death
And oft had faced it where the bravest stayed
The foe in onset and the friend in flight—
And silent too were all who stood about,
Fallen in thought too deep to cry applause
Which yet full many felt and he could not.
By silence roused, they spoke among themselves:
Some held the song ill suited festal hours,
Some that the gravest is the worthiest theme,
Some that poetic truth is only such
The heart at once will know it for its own,
For as it voices, so it touches hearts.
The singing thought in singing words is song,
Said one and others smiled: he had not sung,
For critics seldom have the art they judge.
To change their mood another shepherd sang—
A youth that followed solitude and loved
The upland pastures and the craggy ways
Where shepherds go in summer and where he
Would wander, browned with sun, amid the snow.
The lightning, I have sped in the play of storm
To flash here—there—in rapidly changing form
While rumbles loud the stumbling thunder
Treading the echoes of cloud and of mountain.
Immortal, I awaken, to sleep anon.
O leaping moments mine and as swiftly gone!
What parching land is lying under?
Cloud! to my falchion open a fountain!

The void, the dark, I touch with creative power
And make the sky sublime in the dimmest hour.

The oak, the rock I rive asunder,
Passing in glory, a god to men's wonder!

The sun stood high: they broke off song and play
With relish now for heartening repasts
Ampler that each had brought some gift to all,
Venison pasty, honey, wheaten loaves,
Cakes and the cheese of flocks and spitted meats,
Silvery fish from out the shadowed pool,
Choice herbs, sweet apples, figs and garnered plums
And berries gathered with the morning dew.
But once, altho' with gust, they drank the wine
And many times the sparkling mountain spring.

There in the stillness of the afternoon
When but the falling of a fruit is loud,
One who had listened sang a hymn to Pan,
Arcadian Pan, whose pipes were oftener heard
In the well watered and well wooded vale
When the forefathers came and were in awe.

Pan, all seeing yet unseen,
For whose footing all is green,
For whose garland spring the flowers!
Pan, whose pipings soft and sweet
Rest thee from the noon-day heat,
Pause ere parting! Hearken ours!

Ruler to whose bidding bow
Dryad, faun and naiad, thou
For whose thirst are running clear
All the springs that took their laugh
From thy lips that use to quaff
Where the shepherd too hath cheer!

Who should better sing to thee,
Who should more thy favored be
Than the dwellers of thy land?
Strike each foe with common fear!
Direful to his eyes appear!
Broken flee each hostile band!

God of forest, flock and field!
Songs of prayer and praise we yield
Thee for all the days of peace,
Days that bring to hill and fold
The afterglow of the age of gold!
Still be Pan and give increase!

All liked the matter, some the manner too,
A dancing measure and a happy tone.
Their sentiment the many wish to hear
Advantaged so upon another's lips
And deem him greatest who is most themselves.
A maiden who till then had stood apart
Where, looking up, the sheep were listening still,
Stept forward, gladly greeted, and her lyre
Lightly she touched and sang in soaring tones:

Tell me not thou lovest me,
Dearest! lest I should believe!
Bring me not such joy of thee
Lest, remembering this, I grieve,
For on others thou may'st shine,
I by thee alone, all thine!

Love too deep to be denied,
Love too shy to be confessed,
Ah! why draw it from my breast

Where it lives and should have died
Only with this heart of pain?
Stir it not to joy in vain!

Ne'er be fond or always true!
Ere thou changest, let me perish
In the arms that now would cherish
Me as if of them I grew!
Rather, Fates! at once dis sever
Hearts ye can not bind forever!

To her for prize a figured vase they gave:
They pressed it on her, they who sung before,
Loving her beauty more than their own praise.
For joy she laughed aloud and all with her,
So noble was the vase and in the midst,
Austerely beautiful, Apollo seemed
Laying aside the bow to take the lyre
And triumph in his friends as o'er his foes.

WAYSIDE THOUGHTS

THE flowers, many-hued, are everywhere
I take my way to find the world so fair
'T were Paradise if innocence were there.
Newness to beauty, zest to happiness,
Each season adds to bring us more, not less.
A shower came and cleared: it made in air
Murmur so peaceful, nature was in prayer.
The clouds upon the horizon seemed to change
Into a vaster, farther mountain range
And would on high a world remaking show
And one was like a mist of driving snow

Against the sun that shot a sidelong rift
Through the cloud-chaos in its windy drift.
Earth is a freshened flower to the sun
For all the clouds were rolled away like one.
There were such sights in heaven as are not said
Nor, without seeing, thought, but are, when fled
From vision, never to remembrance dead.
Dying, I shall recall such days as these
And death will take of them a certain ease,
Content that life has found so much in play
Of sense and fancy, for it is a day
Such as creation knew when light was made
And universal darkness grew its shade.
How every field and hillside has a voice—
Each bird that carols still "Rejoice, rejoice!"
Still would I look around and look above—
The joy of life is all-embracing love—
And still my thoughts would lighten to and fro
For all is mine if but all thought is so.
If well the music show the instrument
And nature's gift be some divine intent,
Do not her innate harmonies of love,
The soul's true music, draw her looks above?
The soul would be immortal if she could:
How comes it save by nature that she would?
Her immortality we then admit
If but our nature's wonted reach befit
Our destiny, as reason is it should,
And if on earth we hold such heavenly good,
The impulse to immortal love and bliss,
Immortal is the soul to compass this.
Just out of view a thrush is singing free
As if to endless memory in me.

Life too intense to know that it must die!
O singing joy too breathless for a sigh
When the sweet note has borne thee heaven-high!
I too shall couch with death some sunless day
Under the roots of spring, as if in play
Hiding more shyly from the world away
To quicken death to life that dies anew.
The bloom, the mould what interchange pursue!
What if the hills I trod in joy and laughter
Forget me, if it be for joy hereafter?
Let me be as the winds that have their will!
Forget me! But I shall remember still
In what high peace of what immortal state,
Where happiness can make the heart more great,
And in my Father's house where I shall be
What pleaseth Him and have what pleases me,
I yet would have a window that should give
Upon the happy land where I did live!

PONCE DE LEON

His quest was youth—his youth of old—
Youth that can turn all else to gold.
No longer, ghost-like, would he rove
But find within a far-off grove
The fount of healing manifold.

How strange a hope now hope is cold!
But wonders did the age behold.
When half a world was treasure-trove,
His quest was youth.

A grave he found, the youthful-souled!
Mindful no more his prime was bold
But only how in age he strove,
A legend of all hearts men wove
Into the tale so often told:
His quest was youth.

MAIDEN

HER finer sensibilities require
Something as fine that they have never found.
The springs of tenderness within her bound,
Having no outlet to the sun, retire
In unseen courses of the heart's desire
And, like the waters passing underground,
Marked by the verdure they have spread around,
Well up in flowers, dewy cups of fire.
Serenity, accomplished sacrifice,
Are in her mien: there is no longer strife
But joy of nature's gift, not at a price.
Triumph and grief from her unworldly days
Turn all their tumult, leaving her a life
Of quiet uses and of gentle ways.

CASTLES IN AIR

CASTLES in air! with straining eyes,
The sun I follow down the skies
And rest my head on dream and dew
Until I hear the hound pursue
The stag to horn and hunting cries.

The bannered courts of love, the prize
Of echoed song, as I grow wise,
Living by hope, I change for new
Castles in air!

Yet fancy! light e'en sorrow's eyes
As sunny places where rain lies!
My spirit with thy own endue!
My flesh has felt immortal too
And lightly still to song arise
Castles in air!

THE INNOCENCE OF CHILDHOOD

O PARADISAL unity of soul
To know no wrong and no division hence
Of will and wit, of spirit and of sense,
But goodness making all thy being whole!
Why run apace, already at the goal?
But dwell on earth as if in heaven. Thence
Draw virtue which is still its own defence
And happy impulse growing self-control!
Childhood! how fortunate in age is he
Who conquers still what he did then possess
And joins the merit with the happiness
Of innocence so perilously free—
An innocence the world may take, not give!
What joy is more or can without it live!

THE COMING OF LOVE

THE bonds of childhood are by youth undone
And heart and action to one music move—
Adventure and companionship in one,
The thrill of beauty and the trance of love!
Glamorous gay romance renewing story,
The happy sympathies our natures find,
Ideal impulse, worship crowned with glory!
The heart has secrets even from the mind!

If from the body's fairness love outgrew,
As wide as life and reaching still above,
It ends not there: the soul began there too.
Love to the soul belongs, the soul to love,
And love can have no other measure than
The greatness of the soul which is the man.

LA VÉRITÉ

QUE la vérité du coeur
Seulement vous semble vraie !
C'est l'amour dedans sa plaie.
C'est l'éternel dans la fleur,
L'âme dans la fantasia
Et la beauté dans la vie.

C'est la chanson du bonheur
Tendre jusqu'à la tristesse.
C'est l'enfance et la sagesse
Se regardant dans un coeur.
C'est la vôtre et pour tous comme
La pitié divine à l'homme.

LES MÉTAMORPHOSES

C'EST des roses que l'abeille
Fait son miel
Dont la douceur est pareille.
Les poètes, par un tel
Changement même du fiel
Sur leurs lèvres, font merveille,
Car, à force de douleurs,

La chanson, dans tous les coeurs,
Comme d'abord dans les leurs,
Saisit—affranchit—enflamme
L'idéal et l'éternel,
Le divin essentiel,
Comme en l'homme Dieu fait l'âme
Pour le ciel.

HOURS OF YOUTH

OTHERS will know the hours when longing still
Is joyful, for 't is hope that looks before,
When happy days may vanish as they will
And we regret them not for we have more.
Like unremembered dreams of smiling sleep,
Days fell from us as if they were the moult
Of growing wings of youth that were to sweep
Forever o'er the falling thunderbolt.
The soul was joy, the flesh the laugh of life:
Hope triumphed in itself and would look o'er
The far horizon with new heavens rife,
So mystery leads young spirits and the more
In them will charm us who discern alone
Stars riding the dark night to ends unknown.

REMEMBERED GRIEF

UNSETTLING every thought for woe or weal
Sorrow comes not in one form unto all
But comes to each as she may most appall
And like a false friend, tho' the heart we steel,
Knowing the armor's weakness—where we feel—
Turns in the wound the dagger as we fall
Betrayed by every fleeing hope we call,
Afraid of our own daring, to be leal.

I grieve but to remember so much grief—
Eternal past that can not be undone!
It is the loss: let it not be the thief.
The present—all we have—is in the sun.
By sorrow, as a blinded man his sight
Renewed by miracle, I prize delight.

MELANCHOLY

THE wish without the effort—how misplaced!
Self-pity's self-betrayal in disguise:
Its tears are but a blindness to the eyes.
Wan damsel, shrinking from the world in haste
Yet sick of thy own gloom and passion waste!
From clinging sorrow, troubled dream, wilt rise?
Too like a nymph, when yearning for the skies,
Drawn down the whirlpool with the wave she
graced!
Thy dearest handmaids—thoughts of all delight—
Go sighing lest they mock. As one would fain
Dream he is well but wakened by his pain
Must sleepy-eyed yet sleepless watch the night,
Thy faint heart, weary of itself, will brood,
Wistful of pleasure in her highest mood.

LAUGHTER

O LAUGHING girls! it does man good
To know there is such joy on earth.
For youth you laugh and would we could!
O laughing girls! it does man good
This joy of nature unwithstood.
Unforced and unsuppressed your mirth,
O laughing girls! it does man good
To know there is such joy on earth.

TO THE FAIREST

Be all that you inspire! Embower,
As fragrance in its tender flower,
The graces and the sweet of life
A virtue knowing naught of strife,
A soul that moves in smiling power!

O heart like an enchanted tower
To hold without the storms that lower,
To laugh within to flute and fife!

Be all that you inspire!

Your beauty's right, your nature's dower
Is love and let its golden hour
Grow endless springtime! Wooed or wife,
Make earthly paths with heavenly rife!
All joy possess and, radiant, shower!

Be all that you inspire!

THE LOVER'S REPLY

MAY one love so oft nor more
Often, do you ask me yet?
If I loved, it was to dream
Of thy coming, love supreme!
Even to myself I seem,
As to others, since we met,
Never to have loved before.

True to one made one with song,
Sought in others, found in thee,
Heart so shrined I must adore!
Love, if in my soul before,
Grows to be that soul and more.
Once in life such love can be,
Once because it is as long.

FAME

WHEN first we thought upon our fame,
Sister or sweetheart seemed the name
That we should call her if she came.
Daughter! we greet her, for, behold!
She is so young and we so old.

ROBERT HERRICK

How springing to thy lips the words
Are tuneful still and new,
As if a cage of singing birds
Were opened and they flew
Scattering song as sun his beams
In which the earth as heavenly seems!
What busy change to-day will make,
To-morrow make away!
For this thy will would never break
Thy heart but give it play
That soul and song should fare with joy
Too native to the heart to cloy.
Thy joyous eye has made all life
About thee fair to see
And with creative fancy rife
It felt not but for thee—
Illusion by which art transcends
The real for ideal ends!

POETIC TRUTH

EACH poet gives to poesie
The something new which is his soul
And I, whose song has grown with me,
Seek, beyond self, the whole.

The vision grant me and I can
Utter not so much words as things.
The word is called out of the man
By that he sees and sings.

Truth blossoms with a life that takes
Leafage of joy and fruit of love
And, more revealed, its beauty makes
The heaven of song above.

BARDS OF OLD

No people wholly conquered hold
While they retain the songs of old
To forge anew in hearts of flame
The sword of freedom and of fame,
For till they make another tongue
That never of their freedom sung
Their own and take the conqueror's name,
Their hearts, their sires, are still the same.

THE POET AS PROPHET

THE solitary height of mysteries,
The common depth of feeling whence they rise,
As from the Delphic plain to sunlit skies
Arose the Muses' mountain, how in these
The poet's gaze illumines what it sees!
So great a soul is given to his eyes!
Uttering his highest moment, ere it flies,
He looks beyond a world his vision frees.
Majorities, beginning wrong, grow wise.
Promethean passion and creative will,
A heart of heavenly fire that never dies
But kindles all, they find the poet still—
The single voice of universal thought!
Such has it grown, such liberation wrought!

HOMER

IF time can make its dead the more renowned,
If tears from pity of past tears can start,
From age to age all changes but the heart.
There is thy power: there thy fame is found,
Borne with our wandering race the world around
And made of all men's heritage a part.
The song—at once our nature and thy art—
Enlarges Hellas to the utmost bound.
Let critics, as they will, divide thee now,
But multiplying miracles in truth,
Tho' all too rich for one of them art thou,
O poet blind in age as if to see
Thy young world only with the eyes of youth!
Not by its perished gods, it lives by thee!

SONG PERPETUAL

As the first rose in the last
Springing from all springtime past,
So the olden poet's song
Will renew itself as long
As the heart its sacred fire,
And, as youth that takes the lyre
Is from age to age as young,
Later lays with his are sung
Lest it be a lonely voice
Where all sorrow and rejoice.

THE POETS OF OUR MOTHER TONGUE

As Caedmon heralds Milton from afar,
The great processional of English song
Still passes onward, age on ages long!

No end but time's, as never time shall mar
The noble company whose heirs we are!
That earnest beauty and that music strong
Still perfect, still renew, O poet throng!
As heaven its pageantry of star on star!
The world is all an ear to Shakespeare's speech.
America that took of England heart
To be more free has in her heirship part.
How Poe adventured! Where will others reach?
Such joy is song, altho' in sacrifice,
Preluding harmonies of Paradise!

MILTON

LOVER of liberty and common right
Who looked to freedom till the world grew dim
Beside her glory and the lunar rim
Cut not the darkness closing on the light!
Poet whose aim was of an equal height
E'en with his solace, that the seraphim
Gave of their fire, their vision and their hymn
In heavenly recompense of earthly sight!
Republican England had so great a voice
It lives, altho' she perished, and her daughter
Comes with wild garlands o'er the wild sea water
To strew the grave of Milton and rejoice
His shade with fellowship of spirits strong
In liberty, which is the heart of song.

THE PILGRIM FATHERS

It was their soul that led the Pilgrim band
To come so far and with the wild to cope
For an ideal end, communal hope,
For their own freedom, and a freer land

Than they had known or they could understand
Is formed on their beginnings, for men grope
Darkly below but God in lightsome scope
Completes their purpose with His own more grand.
O soul of man that conquers nature still,
Within him and without, by force of will,
And, single, calls for aid on God alone!
Count this reward and triumph that in time
God bends our action to His own sublime
And on our aspiration sets His throne!

GEORGE WASHINGTON

WITHOUT a thought of self, without a fear,
In power but to serve his native land
And, when there was no danger to withstand,
Laying all powers aside and like a seer
(The mind sees clearly when the heart is clear)
Counseling hopes of ages yet unscanned,
Happy, retired, tho' fittest for command,
The hero, more than crowned, whom all revere,
A man from whom his country's humblest son
May learn that greatness is but great good done,
Whose words are with the force of action sped,
The power of whose life is never dead,
Such man can be for such was Washington,
The man whom glory followed and not led.

THE "PRESIDENT LINCOLN"

"PRESIDENT LINCOLN!" Fitly was it ours,
This giant vessel taken from the foe
Who in a happy moment named it so,
As if in prophecy that overpowers
The tongue of Balaam and a blessing showers,

And where in bronze the words of Lincoln show,
Fitley in hope of world-wide freedom go
Our youth that smile upon the war that lowers.
The vessel sinks beneath them but no fate
Can sink the name that every year sets higher.
If names are memories and therefore great,
If words can speak one soul and all inspire,
The name, the words, of Lincoln shall abide
Upon the sea as on the land—our pride!

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

DEAD? And our grief is loud,
E'en those who fought him bowed
With sense of loss and proud
To claim him as a man
In all American.
Her high heroic mood
His country understood
And loved in him, her son,
Whose thought and act were one.
Dead! And as then his name,
While yet he lived, became
Part of his country's fame,
So now his life has passed
Into her own at last!

OUR COUNTRY'S FLAG

OUR new-world liberty, that at her birth
Shook the old world, uplifted to the sky
These stars that brighten to the sun on high
Like a new heaven over her new earth.

Fairer with years and all they wrought of worth,
Her banner streamed on winds of war that nigh
Rent it asunder, with a deeper dye
Of crimson hued, ere peace returned and mirth.
Our heritage of freedom and renown,
All that high thought and long endearment crown,
Flag of our country! all in thee we hold.
Ever with ampler spread thy colors give
To be like dawn in heaven to all that live
And with new glories still recall the old!

OLD GLORY

WORDS that have too much soul to die,
Deeds that in every age and clime
Set freedom and set manhood high,
The aspirations of all time,—
So well fulfill what they divine
All glories seem a part of thine,
Symbol of all that makes men free,
Of all we have and others hope,
All that among us finds new scope
To grow from age to age as we,
To keep our faith with such a past,
Look to a future yet more vast
And to all coming time bequeath
The flag that with our love we wreath!
Traditions grown an instinct make
A nation: they are in thy mesh
And ever through the years they take
A new resplendence for thy sake.
Our veneration makes thee seem
Old as the heart of man and fresh
As a child's eyes of wonder are
To look upon the morning star
On rising from a starry dream.

NOVUS ORDO SECLORUM

(Motto on the Great Seal of the United States)

DIVIDE and conquer! so the tyrant plans.
Unite! and peace and freedom are each man's.
Men are not free till freed from all alarms
Nor quite at peace while kingdoms stand in arms.
One by a common cause and common foes,
The world's free nations in new union close.
Our fathers' spirit is our precedent.
For freedom what untrodden ways they went!
They crowded with brave change their elder day
And who dare speak for them yet bid it stay?
When theirs was but a nation yet to be,
They dared to found it and to make it free.
Allied with distant powers on fought field,
To all men's rights and conscience they appealed.
Their thought is ours and, if it more disclose,
Why see the bud no longer in the rose?
When despots banded, did our fathers fear
To challenge them to touch the hemisphere
About us or bid wait till they drew near?
The spoilers leagued and reached across the seas
Now spanned at but a single flight with ease
And we have won the war we never sought
And mean to end forever all we fought,
For this is due mankind and due our dead
Who, when the victors march, are at their head.
Monroe! as once the new world was set free
From tread of conquest, so the old will be,
For we are gathered in no world intrigue,
Washington! but in freedom's greater league.
Not against any but for all we strive,
The old world we make new: our faith is live.

Or did our fallen heroes sound retreat?
To press on where they led us is but meet.
They have achieved no momentary gain
But we shall have it ever to maintain.
Let us preserve as they have given peace.
God wrought by them: we shall not bid Him cease
But let the heavens as at the Saviór's birth
Proclaim that good will maketh peace on earth.
Not singly have we fought nor can withdraw
With honor from a world that asks for law
Which force sustains and can not overawe
That open counsels of the free alone
May govern world affairs, each folk their own.
New order of the ages! this we seal
As we began it in our commonweal.

HONOR'S PRAISE

WHAT praise is due to virtue that is whole,
If even in base men a good deed shines
In but a moment's kindling of the soul,
A single jewel in what darksome mines!
No longer speak of an immortal name:
Unfailing manhood should have more to prize—
A soul above and deeds as high as fame.
As life is growth, its best within us lies.
Honor, the good supreme of life, the crown
Of all our exploits, solace of our death,
For such a soul it has, the living breath
Of the least act as much as of renown,
The soul of knighthood to refrain and dare,
Its aspiration bids all praise forbear!

DEATH

DEATH comes—if seeming distant, drawing near.
So many of the good have gone before,
So few remain, why dread the further shore
Nor rather this? Has life no hope more dear
Or is its end defeat that we should fear?
Who lives to conquer, would die conqueror.
How vain were life and death, were there no more!
It is eternity that opens here.
Life—the frail power that flutters on a breath,
Long shadow shortening to the coming day—
Life is so small a thing beside thee, Death!
I wonder not thou castest it away,
I wonder only that we fear thee so,
Our hope of bliss, deliverance from woe!

OBLIVION

EACH day hath its own death, is laid asleep
And is no more—no more to us or less
Than faded garlands and a cast-off dress.
What slight remembrance of ourselves we keep!
Even the dearest memory is deep,
Deep overlaid with care or new caress.
So we shall be forgotten in the press
Of other lives that have their woes to weep.
We have our day, perchance, or we have not.
Earth-born are we and in the earth forgot:
The tree remembers its dead leaves no more.
God great enough to be to all a friend!
But let our cares look ever where they end,
All time behind, eternity before!

SIC TRANSIT GLORIA MUNDI

WHAT if the many-peopled empire mourn
The man who wore its crown as 't were a fate,
Whose life had linked each crisis of the state
And to whose rule were generations born—
Like a tall oak of all its foliage shorn,
Tortured by lightnings, burdened by the weight
Of tempests all too many—singly great—
Shaken by earthquake last, he stood forlorn!
How many tragedies in one life close
And what exalted sorrows find repose
In the dark earth and common dust of death!
Faith lift him thence as others—thence afar.
Who envies power that superior star?
Who envies glory if it is men's breath?

THE COLOSSEUM

THE Roman people have gone forth: we sum
The destiny of pride, the two-fold sigh,
Desire, despair, a world of passers-by,
The ends of Christian faith, the world to come.
Beyond the concourse loud that is struck dumb,
What vision had the martyrs? Rise on high,
Rich with their blood and open to the sky,
Colossal chalice of their martyrdom!
One life, one death with Christ would they partake
And weakness grew to power for his sake,
A power that lights and lifts the ruin round.
We feel their presence: all the ages here
Are their spectators. Such their acts appear
They only are the victors, heaven-crowned.

"ANIMA NATURALITER CHRISTIANA"

THE soul is naturally Christian—so
Our nature overleaps all sense-desire,
As if our dust were star-dust taking fire,
And yet how blindly, if we nothing know
Of end or object but this mortal show,
How all too blindly, soul! do we aspire!
But part is this or nature is a liar.
Faith made thee whole, for heaven it would bestow
Upon the yearnings which in faith we see
Sublimed, consoled and fortified, as tho'
The hand of God would fashion, swift or slow,
Both grace and nature to one end in thee.
So consonant with nature, faith above
Gives God to be at once both hope and love.

MIDNIGHT

OVER the cluttered city I espy,
Upon a level from this window high,
The rising moon half putting darkness by.
How heavenly her look! How strangely nigh!
So near is glory but no wings have I—
Hardly the faint uplifting of a sigh—
But like the dark beneath that splendor lie
And look, all speechless, to the silent sky.
God's face is hidden but my soul is bare
E'en to a moonbeam: He is present there,
The beauty in all beauty deepest found.
If God made joy and men made sorrow, where
His light is fuller which shall be our share?
It comforts life and death He is their bound.

HOPE NATURAL AND SUPERNATURAL

CARELESS of loss and confident of time,
I feel a force of life like nature's own
Biding the spring, when all is overblown,
To win the songster with his warmer clime
And, all creative, constant to relimn,
Refashion, rather than preserve alone
The sunset glories, each a moment shown,
The flower whose seed is flowers, the vanished rime;
And when I come to die I shall not pause
Upon the past but take, in life's embrace,
The ends of life. Dust, for so much, the price?
Our dust! All gathered in the soul a space,
Life overleaps the flesh and for this cause -
Love passed through death and made it Paradise.

ENLARGED

THE world was not so fair as she
And fairer tho' her presence made it,
She and its brightest sun must flee,
The dusk o'ershade it.

To gloaming earth, O radiant sun!
The moon, thy lovely image, leave
And of thy rays the tenderest one,
The star of eve.

What old remembrance, what new hope,
What nearer consciousness of heaven,
Immortal love, eternal scope,
To time are given!

THE UNBELIEVER

He who believes not in a God believes not in the
soul—
So much of the divine it shares—and even at his
goal
Bears witness that apart from God he is himself
not whole.

MAN IN THE UNIVERSE

Our understanding reaches to that star
That hath no consciousness of its own light.
We weigh it in our mind altho' afar:
So much is thought above its mass and might.
The eye hath more than radiance, having sight,
And with that sense is reason—let none mar
Faith also—for the heavens have such height
That so the soul may find no bound or bar.
Our death is but to be as all things are,
So far as we are flesh, that is in chains:
Our life is spirit and so much remains,
Trampling our dust with its triumphal car,
And man is not so much in thought partaker
With all that we behold as with its Maker.

TO THE CITY OF SAN FRANCISCO REARISEN

(Pindaric Ode)

CITY of victory, looking afar,
Risen from flame as of sunset a star
Nobly serene,
Set for a crown o'er the down-drifting days,
How shall we gather the strands of thy praise
Fitly, O queen?
How shall we utter thy life and thy story?
Thine are the splendor of nature, the spirit of glory.

Named for the pilgrim from all so unbound
He, in his spirit, beatitude found,
Joy in but living
Sweetly conversant with nature and God,
Lover of all from the sky to the sod,
Life of thanksgiving,
Francis, the saint and the poet in one,
Thou art the city as he was the bard of the sun.

Here the brethren of Francis were isled
In the peace that they made in the wild
Where they founded the chapel that stood
In the vale, where the herbage was good,
And it stands in the midst of thy ways
As a prayer still beginning thy days.
In the year that our freedom had birth,
Thou wast sprung at the end of the earth
As a light to the seas without shore
For what Argonauts waiting of yore!

Riding the wind on the tides of the light,
Galleys that under full sail in slow flight
Hover off-shore,
Hued with the sun o'er the shimmering wave,
Clouds that enlarge the sun's glory are brave
Now as of yore.
Nature, immortal co-worker with man,
Strews to the laughter of showers the flowers of
Pan.

Cool as in shade from a summer of sky,
Beaming all sun on the mountain-top nigh,
Wreath thee and veil,
After bright noons, in the vapor of ocean,
Gate of the winds, without tempest, in motion
Swelling the sail
Shoreward and spreading a mist till the sun
Flood with a golden resplendence the course it has
run!

How aroused was thy day-dreaming youth
To be won by our arms yet in truth
As a bride by her lover who goes
To his joy in the flight of his foes!
To the streams that were running with gold
Eldorado would beckon of old.
In thy port are the ships of all seas
And the men of all lands they are these.
Yet if gladdened with greatness, thou art
The more stirred to a greatness of heart.

All of this body of riches and power,
Populous mart and paradise-bower,
All of it sprung

Out of thy heart as love given and won,
Out of thy soul as the dawn from the sun
Ever as young,
Spirit unseared by the flame—a new wreath—
Conquering spirit unshaken by earthquake beneath!

Earth—was it stirred for thy coming in state?—
Ocean to ebb and to flood at thy gate,
Sea-cliff and scaur,
Bays that outspread and mountains that rise
Forested deep or in snowland of skies,
Islands afar,
Sun over all, are as raiment for thee,
Gracing thy grandeur with theirs as an isle with
the sea!

In the falling away of the surge
Will the next billow gather and urge
The embosoming waters more high
And the march of the ocean grow nigh
And from out of the doubtfulest strife
Ever breaks the full force of thy life.
Let the past be thy herald and be
As a trumpet of triumph to thee!
In thy soul let us read the far years!
Still surpass every hope! Perish fears!

